(b) if so, the details thereof with terms of such offer;

(c) whether this offer will benefit the country in any way;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to have plantation of potatoes of high quality in the country in future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) M|s. Quality Tea Plantation Ltd., Calcutta has finalised plans to have M|s. Agrico BV of Netherlands as a joint venture partner for setting up of a potato processing complex in West Bengal for production of quality potato seed for processing, export etc. The joint venture Company is expected to produce different potato products and utilise nearly 60,000 tonnes of raw potato annually.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The processing complex once established will help in utilising potato during glut season, saving enormous post harvest losses and ensure better returns to the farmers and higher production of potato.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. Indian varieties are as good as any other variety in the world and are being used in the potato growing areas regularly. In addition, a few improved hybrids are currently in pipeline undergoing testing for release.

Strawberry Cultivation

1704. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total area under Strawberry cultivation in Maharashtra as on 1st March 1995;

(b) what is the total annual production of strawberry in Maharashtra;

(c) what is the average price realised during the year for strawberry;

(d) what is the demand for strawberry outside the country; and

(e) whether it will be beneficial for farmers to grow more strawberry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (e) As per informations received from Directorate of Horticulture, Govrenment of Maharashtra; the area under strawberry is approximately 1,000 hectares and the production of strawberry in 1994-95 is aronud 20,000 M. tonnes. The average price realised during the year is approximately Rs. 60|- per Kg. The demand for strawberry outside the country is approximately 50,000 M. tonnes.

Since the fruit is extremely perishable in nature and there is involvement of very high cost of cultivation, the area expansion has to be done cautiously keeping in view the export and processing potential as well as development of domestic market.

Incentives to promote Agro-based and Horticulture Projects

1705. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Haryana has formulated Plants for providing comprehensive package of incentives for promoting Agro-based and horticulture projects for export purposes;

(b) whether Government propose to ask Government of Andhra Pradesh to formulate similar plants in future; and

(c) if so, details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.